

2009 Recreational Compliance Guide

Guide for Complying with the Atlantic
Tunas, Swordfish, Sharks, and Billfish
Regulations

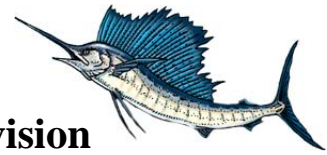
Office of Sustainable Fisheries
Highly Migratory Species
Management Division



(As of November 20, 2008)



Introduction to the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Division



Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS) including tunas, swordfish, sharks, and billfish are managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under the authority of the Secretary of Commerce, with consideration for the domestic and international aspects of these fisheries.

The *Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan* (HMS FMP) was developed for the integrated management of HMS within the Atlantic Ocean, which includes the Caribbean Sea, and Gulf of Mexico. Consistent with the HMS FMP, NMFS recently updated and amended several regulations. Important regulatory changes from the previous Compliance Guide (October 2007) include, **but are not limited to**, the following sections:

- I. Permits
- VIII. Recreational Shark Fishing
- IX. Recreational Tuna Fishing

This 2008 Recreational Compliance Guide amends all previous guides and is produced in compliance with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act. This guide is intended to provide a plain-language summary of how to comply with the regulations for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, sharks, and billfish.

Recreational fishermen **are required** to hold an Atlantic HMS (Angling category) recreational fishing permit in order to recreationally harvest Atlantic sharks, tunas, swordfish, and billfish. Permit applications can be completed online at www.hmspermits.gov or can be obtained via fax or mail by calling (888) 872-8862.

HMS permit holders must abide by all applicable Federal regulations, regardless of where fishing occurs, including in state waters. However, when fishing in the waters of a state with more restrictive regulations, the more restrictive state regulations apply.

Since fishery rules frequently change, it is ***your responsibility as a fisherman*** to become familiar with the latest regulatory updates and to comply with the current official regulations. For a comprehensive list of updated Atlantic HMS regulations, please refer to the ELECTRONIC CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov>). **If there is a discrepancy between this summary and the regulations in 50 CFR part 635, the regulations will take precedence.**

For updates on **Atlantic sharks, swordfish, or billfish** call the HMS Management Division located in Silver Spring, Maryland at (301) 713-2347. For updates on **Atlantic tunas**, such as bluefin tuna quota monitoring or retention limits, visit www.hmspermits.gov or call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at (888) 872-8862. For more detailed information on tunas, contact the HMS Management Division located in Gloucester, Massachusetts at (978) 281-9260.

To request a copy of a particular rule or for current updates, call the HMS Management Division at (301) 713-2347 or by viewing the HMS website at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms. To stay up-to-date on HMS regulations, sign-up for the HMS email newsletter and listserve *Atlantic HMS News* at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/newslist/>.

What’s Inside?

This Compliance Guide covers the four HMS species categories: sharks, tunas, swordfish, and billfish. Each category has a quick reference sheet containing basic, need-to-know information, regarding HMS fishing regulations. More detailed sections that provide in-depth information for each category are also included. There is also specific information regarding Charter/Headboat fishing, HMS Tournaments, and relevant contact information.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	PERMITS.....	4
II.	GEAR DEFINITIONS	5
III.	GENERAL RESTRICTIONS.....	6
IV.	SHARK QUICK REFERENCE SHEET	7
V.	TUNA QUICK REFERENCE SHEET.....	8
VI.	SWORDFISH QUICK REFERENCE SHEET	9
VII.	BILLFISH QUICK REFERENCE SHEET.....	10
VIII.	RECREATIONAL SHARK FISHING	11
IX.	RECREATIONAL TUNA FISHING	12
X.	RECREATIONAL SWORDFISH FISHING	15
XI.	RECREATIONAL BILLFISH FISHING	17
XII.	CHARTER/HEADBOAT FISHING	18
XIII.	TOURNAMENTS.....	21
XIV.	CONTACT LIST	23

I. PERMITS

In order to fish recreationally for Atlantic HMS, fishermen must have a valid Federal fishing permit for their vessel. There are a variety of different permits available. The required permit will depend upon the species being fished for, what type of gear is being used, and how recreational fishing activities are being conducted. There are three types of permits that can be used to recreationally fish for Atlantic HMS: HMS Angling, HMS Charter/Headboat, and Atlantic tunas General category. **Please note that only one type of recreational permit can be issued to a vessel.** Once a vessel is issued a recreational HMS permit, all passengers may recreationally fish for Atlantic HMS species. Please refer to each species section for specific restrictions regarding target species and gear use.

HMS Angling: This permit is strictly for recreational fishing (*i.e.*, no sale) and is issued to the owner for a specific vessel.

HMS Charter/Headboat: This permit is required for vessels taking for-hire passengers recreational fishing for Atlantic HMS. See Section XII for detailed information.

Atlantic tunas General category: This permit is a commercial fishing permit for Atlantic tunas, but can be used for fishing recreationally for all HMS **only** when participating in a registered HMS tournament.

The Atlantic tunas General category permit is a commercial fishing permit; however, an exception in the regulations allows General category permit holders to fish recreationally in registered HMS tournaments. See Section XII for more information.

To acquire or renew an HMS recreational fishing permit, fishermen must complete either an initial or permit renewal application. Applications can be completed online at www.hmspermits.gov or obtained via fax or mail by calling (888) 872-8862.

Where do the Federal regulations apply?

Federal recreational fishing regulations apply in federal waters, and may also apply to recreational fishing in state waters. Fishermen possessing a Federal HMS fishing permit who are fishing in state waters should note that the Federal regulations apply, unless the state regulations are more restrictive. Therefore, fishermen who are planning on fishing in state waters should familiarize themselves with the appropriate state regulations, as they may be species and situation-specific. A list of state agency contacts can be found in Section XIV.

II. GEAR DEFINITIONS

Each HMS permit allows the use of certain fishing gears, depending on: 1) the type of permit, and 2) the HMS that is being fished for. Certain gears may only be fished certain ways, while others may be fished using multiple techniques or approaches. Please see each species section for specific fishing gear information and definitions.

Bandit gear – Consists of a vertical hook and line gear with rods that are attached to the vessel when in use. Lines can be retrieved by manual, electric, or hydraulic reels.

Circle hook – With regard to Atlantic HMS, a circle hook is a hook originally designed and manufactured so that the point of the hook is turned perpendicularly back toward the shank of the hook to form a generally circular or oval shape.

Rod and reel – Consists of a handheld fishing rod with a manually or electronically operated reel attached.

Handline – Consists of a mainline to which no more than two gangions or hooks are attached. A handline is retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means, and must be attached to, or in contact with, a vessel.

Speargun – Consists of a muscle-powered speargun equipped with a trigger mechanism, a spear with a tip designed to penetrate and retain fish, and terminal gear. Terminal gear may include, but is not limited to, trailing lines, reels, and floats. The term “muscle-powered speargun” means a speargun that stores potential energy provided by the operator’s muscles, and that releases only the amount of energy that the operator has provided to it from his or her own muscles. The operator must be physically in the water when using this gear.

Greenstick – An actively trolled mainline attached to a vessel and elevated or suspended above the surface of the water with no more than 10 hooks or gangions attached to the mainline. The suspended line, attached gangions and/or hooks, and catch may be retrieved collectively by hand or mechanical means. Greenstick does not constitute a pelagic longline or a bottom longline as described at § 635.21(c) or § 635.21(d), respectively.

Secondary gears – Secondary, or “cockpit,” gears may only be used at boatside to aid and assist in subduing, or bringing onboard a vessel, Atlantic HMS that have first been caught or captured using primary gears authorized for recreational HMS fishing. Secondary gears include, but are not limited to, dart harpoons, gaffs, and tail ropes. Secondary gears may not be used to capture, or attempt to capture, free-swimming or undersized HMS.

FISHING TECHNIQUES

Surface trolling – A fishing technique where the lines trail behind a vessel which is in constant motion at speeds in excess of four knots with a visible wake. Such trolling may not involve the use of down riggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices.

Down rigger – A piece of equipment attached to a vessel that has a weight on a cable that is in turn attached to hook-and-line gear to maintain lures or bait at depth while trolling. Downriggers are to be used with the authorized recreational hook and line gears including bandit, rod and reel, handline, and greenstick gear.

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

III. GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

Recreational fishermen who receive or renew an Atlantic HMS permit may fish recreationally for Atlantic HMS in open areas. Please note that the following areas are closed to recreational Atlantic HMS fishing:

CLOSED AREAS

- The Tortugas Marine Reserves: Closed year-round to all fishing and anchoring in the EEZ. The Tortugas North area is bounded by 24° 40'00" N. lat., 83° 06'00" W. long.; 24° 46'00" N. lat., 83° 06'00" W. long.; 24° 46'00" N. lat., 83° 00'00" W. long.; thence along the line denoting the seaward limit of Florida's waters, as shown on the current edition of NOAA chart 11438 to 24° 40'00" N. lat., 83° 06'00" W. long. Tortugas South is bounded by 24° 33'00" N. lat., 83° 09'00" W. long.; 24° 33'00" N. lat., 83° 05'00" W. long.; 24° 18'00" N. lat., 83° 05'00" W. long.; 24° 18'00" N. lat., 83° 09'00" W. long.; 24° 33'00" N. lat., 83° 09'00" W. long. (50 CFR 622.34(d)).
- Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas: Surface trolling is allowed from May-October, consistent with the recommendations of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, but fishing by any other method is prohibited year-round. The coordinates for the Madison-Swanson closed area are: 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long.; 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.; 29° 06' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.; 29° 06' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long. The coordinates for the Steamboat Lumps closed area are: 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long.; 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long.; 28° 03' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long.; 28° 03' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long. Surface trolling is defined as fishing with lines trailing behind a vessel which is in constant motion at speeds in excess of four knots with a visible wake. Such trolling may not involve the use of downriggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices.
- Other Marine Protected Areas: There are a number of marine protected areas (MPAs) throughout U.S. waters that may restrict recreational fishing activities. For more information on MPAs and their restrictions, please visit www.mpa.gov.
- TARGETING BLUEFIN TUNA IN THE GULF OF MEXICO IS PROHIBITED YEAR-ROUND: This area has been designated as bluefin tuna spawning grounds, thus, targeting bluefin tuna is prohibited. However, HMS Angling or HMS Charter/Headboat permit holders may retain one "trophy" bluefin tuna (>73") per vessel per year from the Gulf of Mexico caught incidentally while targeting other species.

IV. SHARK QUICK REFERENCE SHEET



AUTHORIZED SPECIES (species that may be retained)

- Large Coastal Sharks (LCS): blacktip, bull, great hammerhead, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, spinner, and tiger sharks (non-ridgeback LCS plus tiger).
- Small Coastal Sharks (SCS): Atlantic sharpnose, blacknose, bonnethead, and finetooth sharks.
- Pelagic Sharks: blue, oceanic whitetip, porbeagle, shortfin mako, and thresher sharks.

PROHIBITED SPECIES (species that must be released)

- Atlantic angel, basking, bigeye thresher, bignose, Caribbean sharpnose, Caribbean reef, dusky, Galapagos, longfin mako, narrowtooth, night, sandbar, sandtiger, bigeye sandtiger, sevengill, silky, sixgill, bigeye sixgill, smalltail, whale, and white sharks*.

* A person may fish for white sharks with rod and reel, provided that the person releases such fish to the sea immediately with minimal injury, and that such fish may not be removed from the water.

PERMITS AND GEARS

Authorized Permits	Gear	Species
1. HMS Angling, OR 2. HMS Charter/Headboat, OR 3. Atlantic tunas General category ONLY if participating in an Atlantic HMS registered tournament.	Handline, and Rod and Reel**	LCS, SCS, and Pelagic sharks

** Rod and Reel includes downriggers

SIZE/BAG LIMITS AND SEASONS

Permits	Size Limit***	Bag Limit	Season
All permits listed above	>54" FL	1 shark per vessel per trip any authorized species	Jan. 1-Dec. 31
	None	1 Atlantic sharpnose and 1 bonnethead per person per trip	

*** Fork Length measurement

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- If contacted, fishermen must participate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS). Survey contact may occur at the dock or by phone.

RESTRICTED AREAS

- Tortugas Marine Reserves (year-round)
- Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas (year-round) (surface trolling without downriggers allowed May-October)

LANDING RESTRICTIONS

All sharks must be landed with the head, fins, and tail naturally attached, but may be gutted and bled at sea. An Atlantic shark harvested from its management unit that is not retained must be released in a manner that will ensure maximum probability of survival, but without removing the fish from the water.

V. TUNA QUICK REFERENCE SHEET



AUTHORIZED SPECIES

- Bluefin tuna (BFT), bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack (*i.e.*, “BAYS”) tunas

PERMITS AND GEARS

Authorized Permits	Gear	Species
1. HMS Charter/Headboat	Bandit	BAYS and BFT
1. HMS Angling, OR 2. HMS Charter/Headboat, OR 3. Atlantic tunas General category ONLY if participating in an Atlantic HMS registered tournament.	Handline, and Rod and Reel*	BAYS and BFT
1. HMS Charter/Headboat, OR 2. Atlantic tunas General category ONLY if participating in an Atlantic HMS registered tournament.**	Greenstick	BAYS and BFT
1. HMS Angling, OR 2. HMS Charter/Headboat	Speargun	BAYS only

* Rod and Reel includes downriggers **Tournament rules vary, please check with the Tournament Director

SIZE/BAG LIMITS AND SEASONS

Species	Size Limit***	Bag Limit	Season
Albacore	None	None	Jan 1-Dec. 31
Bigeye	27” CFL	None	Jan 1-Dec. 31
Bluefin	27 to <47” CFL	1 per vessel per trip per day****	Jan 1-Dec. 31
	47” to <73” CFL	1 per vessel per trip per day****	Jan 1-Dec. 31
	≥73” CFL	1 per vessel per year	Jan 1-Dec. 31
Skipjack	None	None	Jan 1-Dec. 31
Yellowfin	27” CFL	3 per person per day	Jan 1-Dec. 31

*** Curved Fork Length measurement **** Bluefin tuna retention limits may change throughout the season. Visit www.hmspermits.gov, or call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9260.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- All recreational bluefin tuna landings (except in MD and NC) must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at www.hmspermits.gov, or by calling (888) 872-8862.
 - Fishermen in MD and NC must report their bluefin tuna catch at a state-operated reporting station (see Section IX for details).
- If contacted, fishermen must participate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS). Survey contact may occur at the dock or by phone.

RESTRICTED AREAS

- Tortugas Marine Reserves (year-round)
- Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas (year-round) (surface trolling without downriggers allowed May-October)
- Targeting BFT in the Gulf of Mexico is prohibited (year-round)

LANDING RESTRICTIONS

All tunas must be landed with at least the tail and one pectoral fin attached. Atlantic tunas harvested from its management unit that are not retained must be released in a manner that will ensure maximum probability of survival, but without removing the fish from the water.

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

VI. SWORDFISH QUICK REFERENCE SHEET



AUTHORIZED SPECIES

- Swordfish

PERMITS AND GEARS

Authorized Permits	Gear	Species
1. HMS Angling, OR 2. HMS Charter/Headboat, OR 3. Atlantic tunas General category ONLY if participating in an Atlantic HMS registered tournament.	Handline, and Rod and Reel*	Swordfish

* Rod and Reel includes downriggers

SIZE/BAG LIMITS AND SEASONS

Permit	Size Limit**	Bag Limit	Season
HMS Angling OR Atlantic tunas General category***	47" LJFL or 29" CK	1 per person, up to 4 per vessel per trip.	Jan 1-Dec. 31
HMS Charter/Headboat (Charter Vessels)	47" LJFL or 29" CK	1 per paying passenger, up to 6 per vessel per trip.	Jan 1-Dec. 31
HMS Charter/Headboat (Headboat Vessels)	47" LJFL or 29" CK	1 per paying passenger, up to 15 per vessel per trip.	Jan 1-Dec. 31

** LJFL = Lower Jaw Fork Length; CK = Cleithrum to Caudal Keel. See Section X for other measurements.

*** General category landings only in a tournament.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- All non-tournament recreational swordfish landings (except in MD and NC) must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at www.hmspermits.gov, or by calling (800) 894-5528.
 - Fishermen in MD and NC must report their swordfish catch at a state-operated reporting station (see Section X for details).
- If contacted, fishermen must participate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS). Survey contact may occur at the dock or by phone.

RESTRICTED AREAS

- Tortugas Marine Reserves (year-round)
- Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas (year-round) (surface trolling without downriggers allowed May-October)
- South of 5° N latitude (year-round)

LANDING RESTRICTIONS

Swordfish may be headed and gutted at sea, but dressed swordfish are subject to alternative measurements to determine if they are of legal size (see Section X). An Atlantic swordfish harvested from its management unit that is not retained must be released in a manner that will ensure maximum probability of survival, but without removing the fish from the water.

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

VII. BILLFISH QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

AUTHORIZED SPECIES

- Blue marlin, sailfish, and white marlin.



PROHIBITED SPECIES

- Longbill spearfish

PERMITS AND GEARS

Authorized Permits	Gear	Species
1. HMS Angling, OR 2. HMS Charter/Headboat, OR 3. Atlantic tunas General category ONLY if participating in an Atlantic HMS registered tournament.	Rod and Reel*	Blue marlin, sailfish, and white marlin

*Includes downriggers

SIZE/BAG LIMITS AND SEASONS

Species	Size Limit**	Bag Limit	Season
Blue marlin	99" LJFL	None***	Jan 1-Dec. 31
Sailfish	63" LJFL	None	Jan 1-Dec. 31
White marlin	66" LJFL	None***	Jan 1-Dec. 31

** Lower Jaw Fork Length measurement *** There is no bag limit per trip; however, there is a recreational annual landings limit of 250 Atlantic blue and white marlin combined. Please contact the HMS Management Division at (301) 713-2347 for landings updates and seasonal closures.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- All non-tournament recreational Atlantic billfish landings (except in MD and NC) must be reported to NMFS within 24 hours either online at www.hmspermits.gov, or by calling (800) 894-5528.
 - Fishermen in MD and NC must report their billfish catch at a state-operated reporting station (see Section XI for details).
- If contacted, fishermen must participate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS). Survey contact may occur at the dock or by phone.

RESTRICTED AREAS

- Tortugas Marine Reserves (year-round)
- Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas (year-round) (surface trolling without downriggers allowed May-October)

LANDING RESTRICTIONS

Billfish may be gutted at sea, but must be landed whole with head, fins, and bill intact.

NMFS strongly encourages releasing all billfish alive. An Atlantic billfish harvested from its management unit that is not retained must be released in a manner that will ensure maximum probability of survival, but without removing the fish from the water.

VIII. RECREATIONAL SHARK FISHING

AUTHORIZED SPECIES

Large coastal (LC) non-ridgeback sharks (sharks that do not have a ridge between their first and second dorsal fin) plus tiger sharks may be retained recreationally. The LC non-ridgeback sharks include blacktip, bull, great hammerhead, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, and spinner sharks. Small coastal shark species that may be retained include Atlantic sharpnose, blacknose, bonnethead, and finetooth sharks. Pelagic shark species that may be retained include blue, oceanic whitetip, porbeagle, shortfin mako, and thresher sharks. A shark identification guide for recreational anglers is available online at http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/2008/Rec_shark_ID_placard_09_04_2008.pdf

FISHING GEARS AND TECHNIQUES

Authorized fishing gears and permit(s) required for recreational harvest of Atlantic sharks are listed below. Detailed definitions of each gear type can be found in Section II.

Rod and reel: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered HMS Tournament).

Handline: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered HMS Tournament).

Fishermen may use rod and reel and handline gear to fish for Atlantic sharks. Downriggers may be used when fishing hook and line gears. If handlines are used, they must remain attached to, or in contact with, the fishing vessel. Downriggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices may **not** be used while trolling in the Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas. Please see Section III for more information. **There are no restrictions on the types of hooks that may be used to catch Atlantic sharks.**

MINIMUM SIZES

Most authorized species of sharks that may be kept recreationally have a minimum size of 54 inches (4.5 feet) fork length, which is the straight-line distance between the tip of the shark's nose and the fork of the tail (see image below). The only exceptions are for Atlantic sharpnose and bonnethead sharks, which have no size limit. Sharks that are under the minimum size limit cannot be possessed and must be released using a method that maximizes their chance of survival, without removing them from the water.



RETENTION LIMITS

The possession limits for Atlantic sharks are one shark of any authorized species per vessel per trip that meets the minimum size limits, plus one Atlantic sharpnose and one bonnethead shark per person per vessel per trip.

If an Atlantic shark is caught by a hook and not retained, the fish must be released by cutting the line near the hook or by using a dehooking device, in either case without removing the fish from the water.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If contacted on the dock or by phone, recreational anglers must cooperate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS) to facilitate scientific research and catch monitoring on these species.

LANDING REQUIREMENTS

Recreational fishermen **must** land sharks with the head, fins, and tail naturally attached. Sharks may be gutted and bled by making an incision at the base of the tail as long as the caudal (tail) fin is still naturally attached by at least a small flap of uncut skin.

IX. RECREATIONAL TUNA FISHING

FISHING GEARS AND TECHNIQUES

Authorized fishing gears and permit(s) required for recreational harvest of Atlantic tunas are listed below. Detailed definitions of each gear type can be found in Section II.

Bandit gear: HMS Charter/Headboat Permit

Rod and reel: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered HMS Tournament).

Handline: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered HMS Tournament).

Speargun: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat. Can only be used for BAYS tunas.

Greenstick: HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered Atlantic HMS tournament).

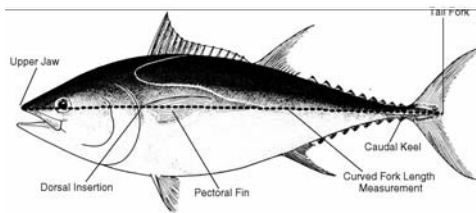
An Atlantic tunas General category permit may be used to fish for Atlantic tunas during a registered HMS tournament; however, General category regulations, including authorized gears, techniques, and size limits apply. Bluefin tuna less than 73" may not be retained aboard General category permitted vessels.

Fishermen may use rod and reel, greenstick, and handline gears to fish for Atlantic tunas. Downriggers may be used when fishing hook and line gears. If handlines are used, they must remain attached to, or in contact with, the fishing vessel. Downriggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices may **not** be used while trolling in the Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas. Please see Section III for more information. There are no restrictions on the types of hooks that may be used to catch Atlantic tunas.

MINIMUM SIZES

The minimum size is 27 inches curved fork length (CFL) for bluefin, yellowfin, and bigeye tunas. There is currently no minimum size for albacore or skipjack tuna.

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008



Curved Fork Length (CFL)

Tunas with heads on

CFL is the sole criterion for determining the size class of whole (with head on) Atlantic tunas. The measurement must be taken in a line, tracing the contour (*i.e.*, curve) of the body from the tip of the upper jaw to the fork of the tail, which abuts the dorsal insertion of the pectoral fin and the dorsal side of the caudal keel.

Tunas with heads removed

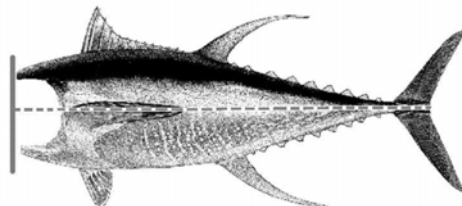
For tunas with the heads removed, pectoral fin curved fork length (PFCFL) may be taken and multiplied by a conversion factor of 1.35 to obtain total curved fork length. The PFCFL measurement must be taken from the dorsal insertion of the pectoral fin, tracing the contour of the body, to the fork of the tail. (**NOTE: The tape must run along the outer surface of the pectoral fin.**)

Bluefin tuna

No person shall retain, or possess a **bluefin tuna** with the head removed that is less than 20 inches (51 cm) pectoral fin curved length.

Bigeye and yellowfin tunas

No person may remove the head of a **bigeye tuna** or **yellowfin tuna** if the remaining portion would be less than 27 inches (69 cm) from the fork of the tail to the forward edge of the cut (see image below).



Forward edge of the cut

RETENTION LIMITS

BAYS tunas

Three yellowfin tuna may be retained per person per day. There are no retention limits for albacore, bigeye, and skipjack tuna.

Bluefin tuna

Recreational bluefin tuna retention limits depend on the size class of bluefin tuna. Size classes consist of school bluefin tuna with a CFL of 27" to less than 47", large school bluefin tuna with a CFL 47" to less than 59", and small medium bluefin tuna with a CFL 59" to less than 73". Recreational anglers need to check the websites or call the telephone numbers below for current retention limits for these size classes. In addition to the daily bluefin tuna retention limits, vessels permitted to fish recreationally may retain one bluefin tuna per year that measures 73" CFL or greater per year, as a "trophy" fish. This fish may not be sold. In the Gulf of Mexico, this trophy is only allowed if caught incidentally while targeting other species.

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

Important notes:

1. Bluefin tuna retention limits are subject to change through out the season. For up-to-date information please visit www.hmspermits.gov, or call the Atlantic Tunas Information line at (888) 872-8862 or call (978) 281-9260.
2. Atlantic tunas General category permit holders may never retain a bluefin tuna <73” CFL, even when recreationally fishing in a registered HMS tournament. If tournament fishing, General category permit holders must abide by commercial regulations for Atlantic tunas.
3. Targeting bluefin tuna in the Gulf of Mexico is **prohibited** see Section III for further information.

If an Atlantic tuna is caught by a hook and not retained, the fish must be released by cutting the line near the hook or by using a dehooking device, in either case without removing the fish from the water.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All recreationally landed non-tournament bluefin tuna must be reported to NMFS by vessel owners or their designee within 24 hours of landing at the dock (for MD and NC landings, see below). This can be done online at www.hmspermits.gov, or by phone at (888) 872-8862. If reporting by phone, the vessel owner will be asked to provide their name, phone number, HMS permit number, species caught, and size of fish. NMFS will return the call and provide a confirmation number for the reported landing. The reporting process is not complete until NMFS has supplied a confirmation number.

In Maryland and North Carolina, vessel owners must report their recreational tuna landings at state-operated reporting stations. For additional information on these state’s reporting stations, please call (410) 213-1531 (MD) or (800) 338-7804 (NC).

If contacted on the dock or by phone, recreational anglers must cooperate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS) to facilitate scientific research and catch monitoring on these species.

LANDING REQUIREMENTS

All Atlantic tunas may be landed round with fins intact, or eviscerated with the head removed, as long as the fish remains within the specified minimum size. The tail and at least one pectoral fin must remain attached through landing, all other fins may be removed.

X. RECREATIONAL SWORDFISH FISHING

FISHING GEARS AND TECHNIQUES

Authorized fishing gears and permit(s) required for recreational harvest of Atlantic swordfish are listed below. Detailed definitions of each gear type can be found in Section II.

Rod and reel: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered HMS Tournament).

Handline: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered HMS Tournament).

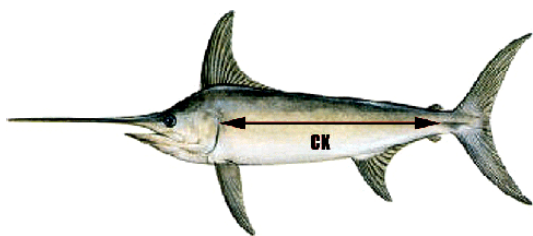
Fishermen may use rod and reel and handline gear to fish for Atlantic swordfish. Downriggers may be used when fishing hook and line gears. If handlines are used, they must remain attached to, or in contact with, the fishing vessel. Downriggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices may **not** be used while trolling in the Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas. Please see Section III for more information.

There are no restrictions on the types of hooks recreational fishermen may use to catch Atlantic swordfish. However, NMFS recommends that fishermen use circle hooks to reduce the mortality of released swordfish.

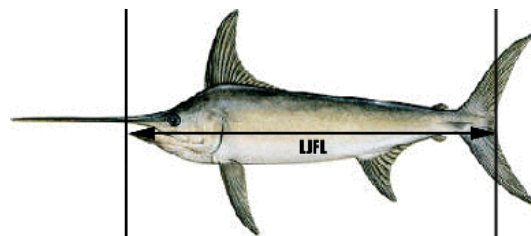
MINIMUM SIZES

There are a variety of minimum sizes, and measurements for swordfish. Any one of these three measurements can be used to determine if the swordfish is of legal size.

1. 47" (119 cm) lower jaw fork length (LJFL): Straight line measurement from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail.
2. 29" (73 cm) cleithrum to caudal keel (CK): Curved length measurement from cleithrum to caudal keel.
3. 33 lbs (15 kg) dressed weight (dw): The carcass of the swordfish must weigh 33 lbs after it has been headed and gutted.



Cleithrum to Caudal Keel (CK)



Lower Jaw Fork Length (LJFL)

RETENTION LIMITS

Recreational retention limits for swordfish depend upon the type of fishing permit that is possessed. Fishermen who possess an **HMS Angling permit**, or those fishing in a registered HMS tournament under an **Atlantic tunas General category permit**, may keep one swordfish per person, up to a maximum of four per vessel per trip.

The **HMS Charter/Headboat permit** has different retention limits, depending upon whether the vessel is operating as a charter or headboat fishing vessel. Vessels fishing as **charter vessels**, must be less than 100 gross tons and meet the United States Coast Guard (USCG) requirements to carry six or fewer passengers for hire. Vessels fishing under these requirements are allowed to keep one swordfish per paying passenger, up to a maximum of six swordfish per trip. Vessels fishing as **headboat vessels** must have received a Certificate of Inspection from the USCG to carry passengers for hire. Vessels fishing under these requirements may keep one swordfish per paying passenger, up to a maximum of 15 swordfish per trip.

If an Atlantic swordfish is caught by a hook and not retained, the fish must be released by cutting the line near the hook or by using a dehooking device, in either case without removing the fish from the water.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All recreationally landed non-tournament North Atlantic swordfish must be reported to NMFS by vessel owners or their designee within 24 hours of landing at the dock (for MD and NC landings, see below). This must be done online at www.hmspermits.gov, or by phone at (800) 894-5528. If reporting by phone, the vessel owner will be asked to provide their name, phone number, HMS permit number, species caught, and size of fish. NMFS will return the call and provide a confirmation number for the reported landing. The reporting process is not complete until NMFS has supplied a confirmation number. The vessel owner is responsible for reporting, but the owner's designee may fulfill reporting requirements.

In Maryland and North Carolina, vessel owners must report their recreational swordfish landings at state-operated reporting stations. For additional information on these state's reporting stations, please call (410) 213-1531 (MD) or (800) 338-7804 (NC).

Landings from a registered HMS tournament are exempt from the telephone call-in or internet reporting requirements because tournament operators are responsible for providing the information to NMFS, if selected for reporting. If a tournament operator fails to register a tournament and/or report a landed fish, it is the vessel owner's responsibility to report the landing.

If contacted on the dock or by phone, recreational anglers must cooperate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS) to facilitate scientific research and catch monitoring on these species.

LANDING REQUIREMENTS

Swordfish may be gutted and the head may be removed. Swordfish must remain in either round or dressed form through offloading. Swordfish may **not** be cut into pieces while at sea. If the head or tail of a swordfish has been removed prior to the time of landing, a minimum size of 29" (73 cm) from cleithrum to caudal keel (CK), or a 33 lbs (15 kg) minimum dressed weight shall be applied in all cases.

OTHER RESTRICTIONS

In addition to the Tortugas Marine Reserves and the Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas, recreational anglers may not land swordfish south of 5° N latitude.

XI. RECREATIONAL BILLFISH FISHING

AUTHORIZED SPECIES

Blue marlin, sailfish, and white marlin may be retained recreationally. Longbill spearfish are prohibited and **may not be retained**.

FISHING GEARS AND TECHNIQUES

Authorized fishing gears and permit(s) required for recreational harvest of Atlantic billfish are listed below. Detailed definitions of each gear type can be found in Section II.

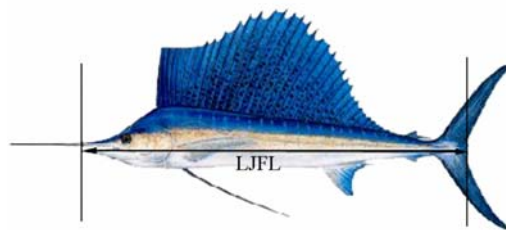
Rod and reel: HMS Angling **OR** HMS Charter/Headboat **OR** Atlantic tunas General category (when fishing in a registered Atlantic HMS Tournament).

Downriggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices may **not** be used when trolling in the Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas. Please see Section III for more information.

There are no restrictions on the types of hooks that recreational billfish anglers can use unless they are participating in an Atlantic HMS billfish tournament. Any fishing tournament that awards points or prizes for Atlantic billfish is considered an Atlantic billfish tournament, even if billfish are not the main species targeted in the tournament. Billfish tournament participants must use non-offset circle hooks when using natural bait or a natural bait/artificial lure combination. J-hooks may only be used with artificial lures.

MINIMUM SIZES

A lower jaw fork length measurement (LJFL) is used to determine if Atlantic billfish are of legal size. The LJFL is a straight line measurement from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork in the tail (see image below). Atlantic blue marlin, white marlin, and sailfish all have minimum size limits (see Section VII). Longbill spearfish are **prohibited** and cannot be retained.



Lower Jaw Fork Length (LJFL)

RETENTION LIMITS

There are no trip limits, but the U.S. has an annual recreational landings limit of 250 blue and white marlin combined. If NMFS determines that the U.S. has exceeded, or will exceed, its annual landings limit, the Agency may prohibit possession of Atlantic marlins for that year. NMFS may modify the minimum size requirements for billfish to maintain compliance with the annual quota. Please contact the NMFS Southeast Regional Office at (727) 824-5399 for the most up-to-date information on quotas and size limits. (**NOTE:** Any changes to the minimum size or closures would also be announced in the Federal Register, posted on the HMS website, and sent via the HMS newsletter and listserv *Atlantic HMS News*.)

NMFS strongly encourages releasing all billfish alive. An Atlantic billfish harvested from its management unit that is not retained must be released in a manner that will ensure maximum probability of survival, but without removing the fish from the water.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

All non-tournament Atlantic billfish that are landed recreationally must be reported to NMFS by vessel owners or their designee within 24 hours of landing at the dock (for MD and NC landings, see below). This must be done online at www.hmspermits.gov, or by phone at (800) 894-5528. If reporting by phone, the vessel owner will be asked to provide their name, phone number, HMS permit number, species caught, and size of fish. NMFS will return the call and provide a confirmation number for the reported landing. The reporting process is not complete until NMFS has supplied a confirmation number.

In Maryland and North Carolina, vessel owners must report their recreational billfish landings at state-operated reporting stations. For additional information on these state's reporting stations, please call (410) 213-1531 (MD) or (800) 338-7804 (NC).

Landings from a registered HMS billfish tournament are exempt from the telephone call-in or internet reporting requirement because tournament operators are responsible for providing the information to NMFS, if selected for reporting. If a tournament operator fails to register a tournament and/or report landed billfish, it is the vessel owner's responsibility to report the landing.

LANDING REQUIREMENTS

Billfish may be gutted, but they must be landed with the head, fins, and bill intact and remain in whole condition.

XII. CHARTER/HEADBOAT FISHING

Vessels fishing with a HMS Charter/Headboat permit are able to take for-hire passengers recreational fishing for HMS. These vessels have different requirements than vessels fishing under an HMS Angling or Atlantic tunas General category permit. Regulations may vary further among Charter/Headboat permit holders based on the following two vessel types:

Charter: A vessel less than 100 gross tons (90.8 mt) that meets the requirements of the U.S. Coast Guard to carry six or fewer passengers for-hire.

Headboat: A vessel that holds a valid Certificate of Inspection issued by the U.S. Coast Guard to carry passengers for-hire.

A **“for-hire”** trip is a recreational fishing trip carrying a fee-paying passenger; or a trip having more than three persons for a vessel licensed to carry six or fewer people; or a trip having more persons aboard than the number of crew specified on the vessel's Certificate of Inspection for a U.S. Coast Guard inspected vessel.

The HMS charter/headboat fishery fleet is managed as a unique sector, due to its intrinsic mix of commercial and recreational operations. Charter and headboat vessel operators should continue to apply for the HMS Charter/Headboat permit, which covers the same fish as the HMS Angling

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

permit. Only one type of permit that allows recreational fishing (HMS Angling, Charter/Headboat, or Atlantic tunas General category permit) may be issued to any single vessel. (**NOTE:** Vessels issued a Charter/Headboat permit cannot possess an Atlantic tunas Longline category permit or other tuna permits.)

COMMERCIAL SALE RESTRICTIONS FOR CHARTER/HEADBOAT PERMITS

Since there are commercial components to the Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat permit fishery, there are instances when the catch may be commercially sold; however, this will depend on the species, and other types of commercial fishing permits that are held. Below is a list of HMS that can be commercially sold according to HMS permit combinations, and the type of charter/headboat trip that is occurring.

Shark

Charter/Headboat AND Shark Directed Limited Access permits

- For-hire: May sell up to the recreational size and bag limits as long as the commercial fishery is open.
- Non-for-hire: May sell up to the commercial size (no minimum size) and bag limits (33 non-sandbar LCS per vessel per trip, no limit for SCS and Pelagic sharks) as long as the commercial fishery is open.

Charter/Headboat AND Shark Incidental Limited Access permits

- For-hire: May sell up to the recreational size and bag limits as long as the commercial fishery is open.
- Non-for-hire: May sell up to the commercial size (no minimum size) and bag limits (3 non-sandbar LCS per vessel per trip, 16 SCS and Pelagic sharks combined per vessel per trip) as long as the commercial fishery is open.

Tuna

Charter/Headboat permit only

- BAYS
 - For-hire: May sell BAYS tuna up to the recreational size and bag limits.
 - Non-for-hire: There are no recreational bag limits but size limits do apply.
- Bluefin
 - For-hire: Sale of bluefin tuna is prohibited.
 - Non-for-hire: For bluefin tuna >73" CFL, Atlantic tunas General category size and bag limits apply. Bluefin tuna cannot be targeted in the Gulf of Mexico. One "trophy" (>73" CFL) bluefin tuna from the Gulf of Mexico **per vessel per year** may be retained, but cannot be sold.

Swordfish

Charter/Headboat AND Swordfish Limited Access Handgear permits

- For-hire: May sell up to the recreational size and bag limits, as long as the commercial fishery is open.
- Non-for-hire: May sell up to the commercial size (47" LJFL) and bag limits (no limit), as long as the commercial fishery is open.

Charter/Headboat AND Swordfish Limited Access Directed or Incidental permits

- No possession of swordfish is allowed under this permit combination due to the requirement to hold Atlantic tunas Longline and Swordfish Directed or Incidental permits in order to retain swordfish.

Billfish

Commercial sale of all Atlantic billfish species is **prohibited**. Fishermen retaining billfish recreationally on a non-for-hire trip may **not** possess commercial limits of other HMS species.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Recreational reporting requirements

Non-tournament landings

All HMS Charter/Headboat vessel owners/operators must report all **non-tournament landings** (*i.e.*, fish kept) of Atlantic bluefin tuna, blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, and swordfish to NMFS within 24 hours of landing at the dock (with the exception of fish landed in Maryland or North Carolina*). Non-tournament recreational landings of all **bluefin tuna** must be reported to NMFS by logging onto www.hmspermits.gov, or by calling (888) 872-8862. Non-tournament recreational landings of all **billfish** and **swordfish** must be reported to NMFS by logging onto www.hmspermits.gov, or by calling (800) 894-5528.

* In **Maryland** and **North Carolina**, HMS Charter/Headboat vessel owners must report their HMS landings at state-operated reporting stations (not via the web or phone number reported above). For additional information on these state's reporting stations, please call (410) 213-1531 (MD) or (800) 338-7804 (NC).

HMS Tournament landings

Atlantic bluefin tuna, billfish and swordfish that are **landed in a registered HMS tournament** do not need to be reported by the vessel owners if the tournament operator reports them. However, a vessel owner is responsible for reporting these landings if the tournament operator does not.

NMFS recreational surveys

Recreational anglers may be contacted on the dock or by phone and asked to participate in the Large Pelagic Survey (LPS) or Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP, formerly MRFSS). If contacted, anglers must participate in these surveys to facilitate scientific research and catch monitoring on these species. Participation in the LPS or MRIP does not fulfill non-tournament reporting obligations

Commercial reporting requirements

Billfish

No commercial landings of billfish are allowed.

Swordfish, Sharks, and Tunas

If a vessel owner issued an HMS Charter/Headboat permit also has a permit issued in a NMFS fishery that is required to report (*e.g.*, NMFS Northeast Region Multispecies logbook (VTR) or NMFS Southeast Region Snapper/Grouper logbook), then any commercial landings must be reported under the appropriate NMFS Regional vessel logbook program. If the vessel owner only holds an HMS Charter/Headboat permit, that owner is required to report commercial landings in the appropriate NMFS logbook program, if selected.

HMS Logbook and NMFS Observer Program

In addition, if selected by NMFS, HMS CHB permit holders must complete a logbook and submit cost earnings information to NMFS. You are not required to carry a fishery observer on board, but you may participate in a voluntary Charter/Headboat observer program. If you are interested in participating in the voluntary observer program, please contact the HMS Management Division at (301) 713-2347.

XIII. TOURNAMENTS

DEFINITION

An Atlantic HMS tournament is defined as any fishing competition involving Atlantic HMS, in which participants must register, or otherwise enter, or in which a prize or award is offered for catching or landing HMS. This includes fishing tournaments where the target species is not an Atlantic HMS, but where points, prizes, or awards are received for catching Atlantic HMS. Tournaments may take place in ports within any Atlantic or Gulf of Mexico coastal state, as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

REGISTRATION

Atlantic HMS tournament operators are required to register their tournament with the HMS Management Division of NMFS **at least four weeks prior** to the start of the tournament.

Registration information includes, *but is not limited to*:

- Tournament name
- Location
- Dates
- Director name, contact information
- Target species

To register a tournament, please call the HMS office in St. Petersburg, FL at (727) 824-5399 to request a form, or download the registration form by clicking on “Reporting Forms” at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms or by clicking on “Tournaments” at www.hmspermits.gov. The completed tournament registration form may either be faxed or mailed back to the following address:

NMFS HMS Management Division
263 13th Ave, South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Phone: (727) 824-5399
Fax: (727) 824-5398

Upon receiving the form, NMFS will produce a tournament confirmation number and mail the number to the operator’s address. Please note that registration is not considered complete unless the operator has received a confirmation number from the HMS Management Division of NMFS.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

NMFS will notify tournament operators in writing if their tournament has been selected for reporting. If the tournament is selected, a reporting form and instructions will be sent to the operator. The reporting form must be returned to the NMFS Southeast Fisheries Science Center in Miami, FL at the address specified on the form within 7 days after tournament fishing has been completed.

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

Tournament registration and reporting is a critical component of the HMS monitoring program. The information collected is used to estimate tournament fishing effort and landings of HMS for stock assessments, national and international reports, and other monitoring efforts.

TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS

To participate in a registered Atlantic HMS tournament, fishermen must have either an HMS Angling, HMS Charter/Headboat, or Atlantic tunas General category permit. Atlantic tunas General category permit holders are prohibited from fishing under HMS Angling category regulations except when participating in a registered Atlantic HMS tournament. When fishing in a registered Atlantic HMS tournament, Atlantic tunas General category permit holders must comply with HMS Angling category regulations for swordfish, sharks, and billfish, and with General category regulations for Atlantic tunas (*i.e.*, General category permit holders may not fish for or land bluefin tuna <73” under any circumstances).

GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

All Atlantic HMS recreational fishing regulations (*e.g.*, size limits, bag limits, gear restrictions, possession restrictions) apply to Atlantic HMS tournament participants. Anglers fishing from Atlantic HMS permitted vessels and participating in Atlantic billfish tournaments must use only non-offset circle hooks when deploying natural bait or natural bait/artificial lure combinations. A billfish tournament is defined as any fishing tournament that awards points or prizes for billfish, even if billfish are not the main species targeted in the tournament. Billfish tournament anglers may deploy “J”-hooks only with artificial lures. NMFS encourages the use of circle hooks by non-tournament anglers to reduce post-release mortality of Atlantic billfish.

XIV. CONTACT LIST

<p align="center">NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT DIVISION Margo Schulze-Haugen, Chief http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms (301) 713-2347</p>		
Topics	Office	Phone Number and Address
Commercial Swordfish Sharks Exempted fishing permits Atlantic HMS News List Pelagic and bottom longline Protected Species Shark and Swordfish LAPs	HMS Headquarters Office	Phone: (301) 713-2347; Fax: (301) 713-1917 Address: 1315 East-West Highway, NMFS/SF1 Silver Spring, MD 20910
Atlantic tunas Atlantic tunas dealer reporting Bluefin tuna Catch Document Program Charter/Headboat operations International Trade Permit	HMS Gloucester Office	Phone: (978) 281-9260; Fax: (978) 281-9340 Address: 55 Great Republic Drive NMFS/SF1 Gloucester, MA 01930-2298
Billfish Swordfish Tournament registration Billfish Certificate of Eligibility Pelagic Longline	HMS St. Petersburg Office	Phone: (727) 824-5399 Fax: (727) 824-5398 Address: 263 13 th Ave. South St. Petersburg, FL 33701
FISHING AND DEALER PERMITS		
- <i>Atlantic Shark and Swordfish Vessel and Dealer permits</i>	NMFS Southeast Regional Permit Office Webpage: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/	Phone: (727) 824-5326 Address: 263 13 th Ave. South St. Petersburg, FL 33701
- <i>Atlantic tunas, Atlantic HMS Charter/Headboat and HMS Angling Vessel Permits</i>	Automated Permitting System Webpage: http://www.hmspermits.gov/	Phone: (888) 872-8862 Please dial "0" to speak with a person.
- <i>Atlantic tunas Dealer Permits</i>	NMFS Northeast Region Permit Office Webpage: http://www.nero.noaa.gov/permits/	Phone: (978) 281-9370; Fax: (978) 281-9366 Address: 55 Great Republic Drive Gloucester, MA 01930
Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS)		
Jonathan Pinkerton	National VMS Program Manager	(301) 427-2300
Patrick O'Shaughnessy	Southeast VMS Program Manager	(727) 824-5358

Please see 50 CFR part 635 for the current Atlantic HMS regulations, as regulations are subject to change. October 2008

NMFS LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICES

Aguadilla, PR	(787) 890-0715	Morehead City, NC	(252) 726-0314
Bellport, NY	(631) 776-1734	New Bedford, MA	(508) 992-7711
Boston, MA	(617) 884-5754	Newport News, VA	(757) 595-2692
Charleston, SC	(843) 852-3343	Niceville, FL	(850) 729-8628
Ellsworth, ME	(207) 664-0508	Ocean City, MD	(410) 629-1258
Galveston, TX	(409) 770-0812	Portland, ME	(207) 780-3241
Gloucester, MA	(978) 281-9213	Portsmouth, NH	(603) 436-3186 x224
Guaynabo, PR	(787) 749-4405	Slidell, LA	(985) 643-6232
Harlingen, TX	(956) 423-3450	St. Petersburg, FL	(727) 824-5344
Marathon, FL	(305) 743-3110	Titusville, FL	(321) 269-0004
Marmora, NJ	(609) 390-8303	Wall, NJ	(732) 280-6490
Miami, FL	(954) 746-4160	Woods Hole, MA	(508) 495-2147

24-Hour Enforcement Hotline: (800) 853-1964

The NMFS Office of Law Enforcement maintains a 24- hour hotline for the public to report potential violations of Atlantic HMS regulations. This number should be used only to report potential violations, not for general information, concerning Atlantic HMS.

U.S. COAST GUARD

Coast Guard Regulations

Commercial vessels are subject to the Fishing Vessel Safety Act of 1988. For information, contact one of the following local Coast Guard offices:

Maine to New York (617)223-8440

New Jersey to North Carolina (757)398-6554

South Carolina to Florida (305)415-6868

Gulf of Mexico (504)671-2154

Please also visit the Coast Guard Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Program's website at:

www.fishsafe.info.

COOPERATIVE TAGGING PROGRAMS

To obtain a tuna, billfish, or swordfish tagging kit or report a tag recovery: (800) 437-3936

To obtain a shark tagging kit or report a tag recovery:

Apex Predators Investigation

NOAA/NMFS/NEFSC

28 Tarzwell Drive

Narragansett, RI 02882-1152 USA

401-782-3200

<http://na.nefsc.noaa.gov/sharks/>

To report Bluefin Tuna recreational landings in North Carolina or Maryland:

North Carolina Harvest Tagging Program: (800) 338-7804

Maryland Department of Natural Resources: (410) 213-1531

STATE FISHING REGULATIONS

State	Agency	Contact Information
Maine	ME Department of Marine Resources http://www.state.me.us/dmr/index.htm	Phone: (207) 624-6550
New Hampshire	NH Fish and Game http://www.wildlife.state.nh.us/	Phone: (603) 868-1095
Massachusetts	MA Division of Marine Fisheries http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dmf/	Phone: (617) 626-1520
Rhode Island	RI Department of Environmental Management http://www.dem.ri.gov/	Phone: (401) 789-3094
Connecticut	CT Department of Environmental Protection http://www.ct.gov/dep/site/default.asp	Phone: (860) 424-3000
New York	NY Department of Environmental Conservation http://www.dec.ny.gov/	Phone: (631) 444-0430
New Jersey	NJ Fish and Wildlife http://www.state.nj.us/dep/fgw/	Phone: (609) 292-2083
Delaware	DE Division of Fish and Wildlife http://www.fw.delaware.gov/Pages/FWPortal.aspx	Phone: (302) 739-9914
Maryland	MD Department of Natural Resources http://www.dnr.state.md.us/	Phone: (410) 260-8264 (877) 620-8367
Virginia	VA Marine Resources Commission http://www.mrc.state.va.us/	Phone: (757) 247-2200
North Carolina	NC Division of Marine Fisheries http://www.ncfisheries.net/	Phone: (252) 808-8013 (800) 682-2632
South Carolina	SC Department of Natural Resources http://www.dnr.sc.gov/	Phone: (843) 953-9312
Georgia	GA Department of Natural Resources http://www.gadnr.org/	Phone: (912) 264-7218
Florida	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission http://www.floridaconservation.org/	Phone: (850) 487-0554
Alabama	AL Department of Conservation and Natural Resources http://www.outdooralabama.com/	Phone: (251) 861-2882 (251) 968-7576
Louisiana	LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries http://www.wlf.state.la.us/	Phone: (225) 765-2800
Mississippi	MS Department of Marine Resources http://www.dmr.state.ms.us/	Phone: (228) 523-4078
Texas	TX Parks and Wildlife Department http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/	Phone: (512) 389-4800 (800) 792-1112
Puerto Rico	Caribbean Fishery Management Council http://www.caribbeanfmc.com/	Phone: (787) 766-5927
U.S. Virgin Islands	Caribbean Fishery Management Council http://www.caribbeanfmc.com/	Phone: (787) 766-5927

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